

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

August 2003



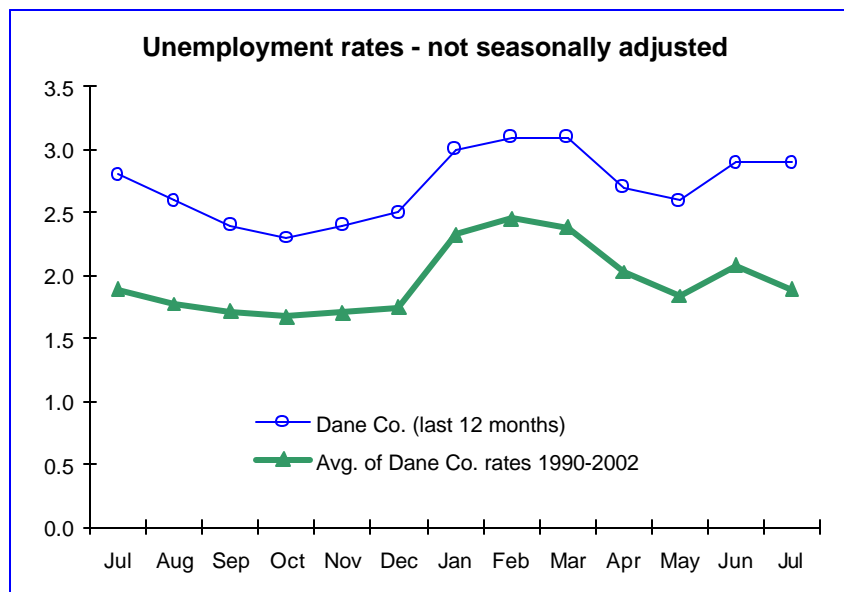
State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## July unemployment rates fall less sharply than usual

For most of the last 12 months, **Columbia County** has posted unemployment rates between 0.4 and 0.8 percent above their typical levels. The July rate was the lowest rate seen since last October, but it was 1.2 percent above the typical July rate. Job growth concentrated in leisure & hospitality (both on a June-to-July basis and on a June 2002 to June 2003 basis). June-to-July gains in retail & wholesale trade and in manufacturing were not enough to bring those sectors up to their 2002 levels. Both sectors have provided fewer jobs for each month of 2003 than they had for the same month of 2002. Information, professional, business & other services remained below 2002 levels but came closer to matching them than they have at any time in 2003.

Instead of the June-to-July decline typical for **Dane County**, the unemployment rate remained steady at 2.9 percent. For most of the last 12 months, rates have been 0.6 to 0.8 percent above their typical levels and the July rate was 1.0

percent above the typical July rate. June and July were the first months of 2003 when retail posted more jobs than the same month in 2002. Manufacturing has reported more jobs for every month of 2003 than it had a year earlier. The June-to-July decline in government employment mitigates some of - but not most of - the aberrant May-to-June increase.



After June's sharper-than-usual increase in unemployment rate, July's sharper-than-usual decrease brings **Dodge County's** rate back in line with the trend (from October to April) of being roughly 1.5 percent to 2.0 percent above its typical levels. June-to-July job growth in manufacturing is welcome, but still leaves the sector nearly 650 jobs below its July 2002 level. Every month this year has

seen sizeable deficits in manufacturing employment when compared to the same month last year. Preliminary data suggest that manufacturing workers' initial claims for unemployment insurance spiked in the first week of August.

## Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	3,167,700	1,980	76,000	469,000	550	18,000	29,900	-180	740	299,000	1,550	14,900
Employed	2,992,300	8,500	65,100	451,700	1,340	16,500	28,300	-70	570	290,300	1,590	14,200
Unemployed	175,400	-6,550	10,900	17,300	-790	1,480	1,610	-110	170	8,700	-30	710
Unemployment rate (%)	5.5	-0.2	0.2	3.7	-0.2	0.2	5.4	-0.3	0.4	2.9	0.0	0.1

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	48,100	-20	560	43,300	-770	-30	7,900	-10	270	40,800	-30	1,490
Employed	45,200	410	300	41,200	-670	-170	7,300	-20	150	39,400	100	1,400
Unemployed	2,900	-440	250	2,100	-100	140	580	10	120	1,450	-120	100
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0	-0.9	0.5	4.8	-0.1	0.3	7.3	0.1	1.3	3.5	-0.3	0.1

\*\* Includes labor force participants residing in area. Estimates are **NOT** seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us.

**Jefferson County's** unemployment rate fell less than it usually does in July, leaving the rate as far above typical levels as it has been at any point since December. Since early spring, construction has posted more jobs each month this year than for the same month last year, and July's year-over-year growth margin is the largest seen yet this year. The retail & wholesale trade sector continued to add jobs in July, instead of shedding them as it did last July. Despite a slight June-to-July dip in employment, leisure & hospitality continues to post more jobs this year than last. Information, professional, business & other services added jobs in July and came as close to catching up to 2002 figures as it has at in month since January. The summer months usually see manufacturing employment peak, so July job losses - even small ones - cause concern, especially when the sector now lags further behind its 2002 standing than it has at any point this year.

Instead of the sharp fall that would be typical for July, the unemployment rate in **Marquette County** rose slightly. For much of the last year, rates have been roughly 1.0 to 1.5 percent above typical levels, so the July jump to 2.5 percent above the typical July level stands out. Manufacturing continues to post more jobs this year than the same month last year, while education & health services still has not added enough jobs to compensate for its sharp drop in January. Each month of this year has seen more retail & wholesale trade jobs than the same month last year, but the positive gap has been shrinking. Information, professional, business & other services have been flat since January, consistently below 2002 figures.

**Sauk County's** unemployment rate was just 0.1 percent above its typical level for July, closer than any other South Central Wisconsin county. Most sectors saw modest June-to-July changes. Comparing this July to last, most sectors seem to be following trends from recent months. The wholesale & retail trade sector would typically add jobs or hold steady in July. This July's loss of trade jobs seems odd. Every month of 2003 has posted substantially fewer trade jobs than the same month of 2002. Adding to the puzzle is the strong growth of leisure & hospitality employment, which might otherwise lead one to expect more retail trade. Some have speculated that travelers' spending has shifted from retail to hotels and resorts that offer an ever-wider range of entertainment. Available data cannot confirm or refute such speculation.

**Employers with multiple worksites** can help improve the quality of employment, wage and labor force data by filing a Multiple Worksite Report (MWR). The voluntary report correctly identifies the employment and wages of *where people work* instead of the data being aggregated in one industry or one location. Say XYZ Company has physical locations in three counties but completes its tax accounting report in only one county. That means all employees and their wages are allocated to that single county this distorts the data for all three counties. The MWR distributes that employment to all three counties and helps to ensure the quality of data used by businesses, economic developers, workers and analysts. For more information, contact Deborah Holt, program manager, at (608) 266-5321.

### Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	2,800,500	-30,700	4,800	439,100	-4,500	9,300	22,000	-370	0	304,300	-2,600	9,600
Const., min'g & nat. resources	131,600	1,800	-8,400	23,300	60	-130	1,270	30	40	15,700	-100	-200
Manufacturing	518,900	-100	-14,400	61,600	670	-620	5,000	20	-110	29,300	500	1,200
Trade (wholesale & retail)	441,100	1,500	6,100	63,500	840	1,320	3,400	20	-120	43,000	800	1,900
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	103,600	-3,000	1,400	11,600	100	430	770	30	20	7,800	-200	1,300
Financial activities	159,100	0	3,900	29,500	-290	1,060	590	0	40	25,800	-300	1,100
Education & health services	362,100	-700	4,900	43,900	150	960	2,500	0	10	29,100	200	700
Leisure & hospitality	262,700	5,700	3,000	46,300	350	3,500	2,900	100	410	24,700	-300	100
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	441,900	3,200	11,800	68,300	-810	690	2,200	60	-10	55,500	-900	1,800
Government	379,500	-39,100	-3,500	91,200	-5,500	2,100	3,400	-640	-280	73,400	-2,700	2,600

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Jul 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	33,500	-190	-290	35,600	-660	-780	4,000	-100	80	39,700	-530	700
Const., min'g & nat. resources	2,500	30	40	1,400	50	50	270	0	0	2,200	50	-60
Manufacturing	10,300	140	-650	9,200	-50	-1,030	1,290	-10	80	6,500	70	-110
Trade (wholesale & retail)	3,800	-40	-50	6,500	70	300	500	10	20	6,300	-30	-720
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	970	-60	60	1,180	-30	-40	60	0	0	830	-40	-10
Financial activities	720	10	-40	960	-10	20	120	0	0	1,300	20	-60
Education & health services	4,200	-10	260	4,500	-20	-20	290	0	-10	3,200	-20	20
Leisure & hospitality	2,900	40	210	3,500	-40	250	530	0	-10	11,700	540	2,500
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	2,900	-10	-260	4,600	30	-60	240	0	-40	2,900	10	-750
Government	5,200	-290	140	3,700	-660	-240	660	-110	40	4,800	-1,140	-160

\*Includes jobs with employers in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary.  
Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding.  
Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us.